

Davis

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY-BELLEVUE MEDICAL CENTER
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
550 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK 16, N.Y.

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGY

May 2, 1957

OREGON 9-3200

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Medical Genetics
University of Wisconsin Medical School
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Joshua:

Congratulations on election to the National Academy. It's nice to see that they will occasionally honor scientific achievement independently of longevity.

I'm glad to learn that you'll be giving a Harvey Lecture next year. Also nice to know that you're getting DAP-requiring L forms from coli. I doubt that I'll be continuing further with the protoplast problem, my main conclusion at present being that DAPless protoplasts are very much tougher than penicillin-induced ones. I think this observation should be valuable for people who are trying to work out biosynthesis of cell walls.

I'm enclosing a copy of a note, just submitted to Science, that I thought might interest you. This work was very much indebted to your penicillin work for its initiation. I also recall that you suggested the use of the thymine auxotroph for its initiation. I also recall that you suggested the use of the thymine auxotroph a couple of years ago, but the medical student who gave it a try never got anywhere. Since Mr. Bauman spontaneously thought of adding the thymine auxotroph after he had got the DAP auxotroph to work, I thought it wasn't necessary to give you double credit for stimulating this work. O.K?

The sad news that you had stopped negotiations with Harvard crossed my last letter to you. I am at least relieved that you have not taken the step towards the West Coast, and I'd like to repeat the reminder that if you like the atmosphere of a medical school I think Harvard might have a great deal to offer. Unless you notify me to the contrary, I shall assume that Harvard Medical School was not excluded at the same time you turned down the Biology Department, and I will plan this Fall to see whether it won't be possible to get the committee to approach you concerning the vacancy they have in setting up what amounts to a research department.

Werner tells me that he had a fine time at your place last week. I presume you've thought of inviting him to represent N.Y.U. at your symposium. Incidentally, Evelyn Witkin has spoken to me several times about her interest in teaching genetics

Dr. Joshua Lederberg

2

May 2, 1957

to medical students, but I never managed to get the people at N.Y.U. to move fast enough to get her to give a set of lectures here. She was invited twice, but each time just a few weeks before the course was to start. She might be a valuable participant in your symposium, and it would be good to whet her appetite for medical genetics.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bernie".

Bernard D. Davis